

PROCLAMATION

WHEREAS, April 2023 marks the 22nd anniversary of Sexual Assault Awareness Month, which raises visibility and serves as an opportunity to share strategies for prevention and identification of risk factors such as education about healthy sexuality, intergenerational trauma, adverse community living conditions, consent, and bystander intervention; and

WHEREAS, the 2023 theme is “Drawing Connections: Prevention Demands Equity,” which calls on all individuals, communities, organizations, and institutions to change ourselves and the systems surrounding us to build racial equity and respect; and

WHEREAS, sexual violence is a serious public health problem that profoundly impacts lifelong health, opportunity, and well-being, with physical, and psychological consequences that may become chronic; and

WHEREAS, every 68 seconds, an American is sexually assaulted; and

WHEREAS, approximately one in six women report being raped during their lifetime, including almost 18 percent of white women, seven percent of Asian/Pacific Islander women, almost 19 percent of black women, 24 percent of mixed-race women, and 34 percent of American Indian and Alaska Native women; and

WHEREAS, young people under age 18 account for about 44 percent of reported sexual assaults; and

WHEREAS, national efforts have focused on reservation-based Indigenous women, recognizing that more than one in two will be victims of sexual violence in their lifetime and more than one in three will be raped, with the risk of rape or sexual assault 2.5 times higher for Indigenous women than non-Hispanic white women, and perpetrators are more likely to be non-Native, and further recognizing that these statistics likely underestimate the true extent of violence against Indigenous women due to systematic underreporting, misclassification, and ongoing distrust of law enforcement; and

WHEREAS, while people with disabilities experience one of the highest rates of sexual assault in America, this community is rarely included in conversations around sexual violence, and lack of representation in mainstream advocacy isolates survivors and their stories; and

WHEREAS, due to limited trauma-informed reporting services, individuals with disabilities face additional reporting barriers due to biases and stereotypes, and frequently are not believed or taken seriously when they do report sexual violence; and

WHEREAS, the commercial sex trade continues to be a very profitable industry, generating \$150 billion annually, and trafficking for sexual exploitation is the most predominant form of global trafficking, currently detected accounting for 54 percent of all trafficking, and females represent 96 percent of victims trafficked for exploitation and, additionally, a vast majority of trafficked individuals experience violence or sexual assault; and

WHEREAS, people who are gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender, queer, or gender non-conforming are nearly four times more likely to be victims of violent crime, including rape and sexual assault, than non-LGBTQIA+ people; and

WHEREAS, with proper education, intervention, and prevention efforts, there is compelling evidence that we can reduce incidents of this alarming and psychologically damaging crime; and

WHEREAS, Denim Day—an annual international day of awareness on the last Wednesday of April—started as a protest against a ruling by the Italian Supreme Court, which overturned a rape conviction because the victim wore tight jeans, implying that she had consented to the sexual activity. Denim Day encourages individuals to wear denim to raise awareness about the harmful attitudes and misconceptions surrounding sexual assault and victim blaming; and

WHEREAS, Denim Day reminds us that sexual assault is never the victim's fault – regardless of what they are wearing or how they are behaving – and everyone deserves the right to safety, respect, and bodily autonomy; and

WHEREAS, the City of Seattle invests more than \$12 million in a network of community-based programming to end gender-based violence via prevention, intervention, coordinated response, and offender accountability programming; and

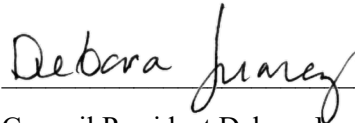
WHEREAS, the City of Seattle recognizes and supports Sexual Assault Awareness Month and the Denim Day movement and encourages all residents to actively participate in efforts to prevent and end sexual violence in our communities;

***NOW, THEREFORE, THE MAYOR AND THE SEATTLE CITY COUNCIL
PROCLAIM APRIL 2023 TO BE***

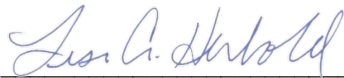
Sexual Assault Awareness Month in Seattle



Mayor Bruce A. Harrell



Council President Debora Juarez



Councilmember Lisa Herbold



Councilmember Andrew J. Lewis



Councilmember Tammy J. Morales



Councilmember Teresa Mosqueda



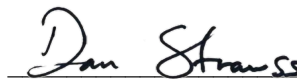
Councilmember Sara Nelson



Councilmember Alex Pedersen



Councilmember Kshama Sawant



Councilmember Dan Strauss